


Community Garden News


City of Loma Linda


May 2003


OFFERING COMMUNITY GARDENERS: IDEAS ...INSPIRATION ...HEALTHFUL TIPS AND RESOURCES ...HEALTHY RECIPES

May Gardening Tips

 When picking those hard-to-see tomato hornworms off plants, sprinkle the plant with water first, then as the worms wiggle to shake the water off they will be easy to see.

 Do not take harvests from asparagus, artichokes and rhubarb you planted this spring. Let the plant use all its energy to develop a strong root system instead of expending it to send up more shoots (if you plan to garden next year of course).

 When removing spent pea vines, cut them off at the soil level rather than pulling them out. The roots should have nodules that contain nitrogen from their fixation process, and this nitrogen is released into the soil as the roots decompose, available for the next crop's roots.

 When foliage on garlic, bulb onions and shallots begins to dry naturally later this month, stop irrigating. This will encourage the dry outer layers to form on the bulbs—necessary for long storage. When about half the foliage slumps to the ground naturally, bend the rest to initiate the maturing. The bulbs will be ready for harvest when the foliage is thoroughly dry and crisp.

Garden *thyme* is
dawn 'til dusk



Getting the Most from Your Garden Produce

Spring is here and the garden is bursting with new life. We are anticipating fresh fruits and vegetables, but before you become overwhelmed with an abundance of produce, here are some storage tips that will help to preserve the nutrient content and flavor of your produce:

- The best time to harvest your vegetables is in the morning as they will be crisper and cooler
- Keep vegetables in the produce drawers (crisper)— it is cooler than the door
- Purchase perforated plastic bags or make small holes (about 20 holes per medium-size bag) in un-perforated plastic bags
- Do not put ripe fruits together with vegetables because they produce ethylene gas which causes yellowing of green vegetables, russet spotting on lettuce, toughening of asparagus, sprouting of potatoes, and a bitter taste in carrots
- Keep things like cabbage, broccoli and other cruciferous vegetables only a few days in the refrigerator because they give off strong odors that may be absorbed by other foods
- Root crops, such as radishes, may cause off-flavors in fruits and leafy vegetables but storing them in plastic bags in the refrigerator will alleviate this problem
- Do not store celery with onions or carrots

“Wild Things” in the Community Garden

On Wednesday April 24th there was a special workshop held in the Community Room for the local Cub Scouts who will be maintaining their own plot in the Loma Linda Community Garden this spring. The boys were excited to learn about using a teepee to grow climbing produce and they liked learning how to use the kid-sized tools that are in the garden shed. The Scouts will be growing some different varieties of squash, tomatoes, and cucumbers. Jim McIntosh, NCN committee member, and community gardener, donated several vegetable plants he started from seeds, to the Scouts and they have already started planting! Keep an eye out as the pack continues to do great things in the garden. Thanks to Jim for all the plants and also for taking the time to show the Cub Scouts how to get started on their garden.



Jim McIntosh shows Cub Scouts how to plant veggies



Cub Scouts are ready to garden!

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Nutrient in Focus: Vitamin C

The most important vitamin in fruits and vegetables is vitamin C, or ascorbic acid, because 90% of the vitamin C in the human diet is supplied by fruits and vegetables. This vitamin is required for the prevention of scurvy and maintenance of healthy skin, gums and blood vessels. Vitamin C also aids in the absorption of iron, reduction of cholesterol levels, enhancement of immune system functioning and prevention of cardiovascular disease and some cancers. Unfortunately, this vitamin is highly sensitive to destruction, but destruction can be decreased or prevented by growing produce in an adequate environment, by proper handling, by storing produce in an optimal environment, and by cooking/preparing foods in a manner that preserves vitamin C.

The Loma Linda community garden is an optimal place to grow vegetables because produce grown outside is exposed to maximum sunlight, and vitamin C is made from sugars supplied through photosynthesis in plants. Temperature also influences the make-up of plant tissues during growth and development, and fruits like grapefruits and mandarin oranges usually contain more vitamin C when grown near the coast where it's cooler, but by refrigerating produce shortly after harvesting, vitamin C can be preserved. Bruises, surface abrasions and cuts can result in faster losses of vitamin C as well, so handle your produce carefully. Citrus juices in unopened bottles, juices with a higher level of fructose (sugar), or juices stored at warmer temperatures will lose vitamin C the fastest.

There are three ways to retain vitamin C when cooking vegetables. In one study, vitamin C retention in frozen spinach was highest after steam blanching, microwave steam blanching and microwave blanching. Loss of vitamin C is usually due to very hot water that leaches the vitamin from the tissue of the vegetable.

Basically, by continuing to grow produce in the garden, handling produce with care, cooking it with minimal amounts of water, refrigerating produce soon after harvesting and selecting juice and storing it properly will result in maintenance of adequate vitamin C levels and keep you happy and healthy.



VOLUNTEER CLEANUP DAY

This is your chance to
make Loma Linda
even more beautiful!

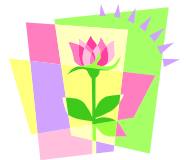
Sunday May 18, 2003

8:00am-9:00am Registration at the
Civic Center Parking Lot

9:00am-11:30am Clean up in Loma
Linda, including flower planting in
the community garden

**Contact the Public Works
Department to volunteer:
(909) 799-4400**

The World's favorite season is the spring.
All things seem possible in May.
—Edwin Way Teale



Recipe Corner

***Zesty Red Bean Dip and Vegetables* ~ Serves 4**

Calories: 134; Carbohydrate: 24g; Protein: 8g; Fat: 0.8; Fiber: 7g

1 15 oz can dark red kidney beans, undrained
1/4 tsp garlic salt
1/4 tsp pepper
1/4 tsp cumin
1/4 cup fresh dill, roughly chopped
1/4 cup plain, low-fat yogurt

1 green bell pepper hollowed out with seeds removed
1 medium bell pepper sliced into strips
1/2 cup grape tomatoes
1/2 cup baby carrots
1/2 cup bite-sized broccoli florets

Discard 2 Tbsp of liquid from beans. Puree remaining liquid and beans with seasonings then add yogurt and mix. Add mixture to hollowed pepper and arrange vegetables around dip.